

Submitting a dead bird for West Nile virus testing



Crows, blue jays, magpies, hawks, owls, and eagles are particularly susceptible to West Nile Virus.*

Not every dead bird is worth testing. WNV can be identified only from relatively freshly dead carcasses. **Birds that are decomposed or have maggots can not be tested.**

Please use the “Dead Bird Submission” form. If you have questions call **1-800-592-1861**

Do not touch the bird with bare hands. Use rubber gloves when handling a dead bird. If you don't have gloves, insert your hand into a plastic garbage bag, grasp the bird carefully, invert the bag over the bird and tie it shut.

Double-bag: Each bird should be placed in the zip-lock plastic bag, then placed inside a second zip-lock bag. Double-bagging prevents cross-contamination and leaking containers that may contaminate vehicles and people during transportation.

Dead birds should be packed with cold packs and sent to the State Public Health Lab Monday through Wednesday to assure the samples do not spend the weekend in the post office. Dead birds may be kept cool in a bait refrigerator or specimen cooler while you wait for posting.

Do not freeze the bird.

Tape the Styrofoam box shut.

You may deliver the bird to the Public Health Laboratory at the address below.

Use the enclosed blue pre-paid address labels and the instruction labels.

Test results will be reported back to the person submitting the bird (#6 on submission form). A positive West Nile virus test indicates the presence of the virus in a locality, it does not suggest higher risk at the immediate point of collection.

See the Department of Health Website for recent information www.state.sd.us/doh/westNile/

In an insulated container with ice packs either ship or deliver directly to:

State Public Health Laboratory *Attn: West Nile*
615 East 4th Street
Pierre, SD 57501

Transport the specimen by the quickest means possible.
Call **1-800-592-1861** for more information.

*Birds will be tested until 2 West Nile virus detections are made per county, unless GF&P investigates.